Info-ParaNet Newsletters Volume I Number 515

Monday, January 6th 1992

Today's Topics:

Re: Firsthand Account
Ufo Announcement
Re: Firsthand Account
CUFOS Abduction Videotape
Noriega Trial
Seasons Greetings!
Re: Raf Bentwaters/woodbridge
Re: Receipt Acknowledged
Re: 300,000 yrs ago, humans in Americas
Cufos Abduction Videotape
Cheap analysis of light sources (gulf breeze, etc.)
The Famous Dr. Steel On 1991 Vg [forwarded]
NOT HELIOS 1?
Re: Re^2: Firsthand Account
Plasma Vortices
Oldest Secret Document

From: Michael.Corbin@p0.f428.n104.z1.FIDONET.ORG (Michael Corbin)
Subject: Re: Firsthand Account
Date: 18 Dec 91 05:18:00 GMT

 * Forwarded from "Alt.Alien.Visitors"
 * Originally from Christopher S. Diaz
 * Originally dated 12-16-91 12:13

From: diaz@ms.uky.edu (Christopher S. Diaz)
Date: 16 Dec 91 04:01:45 GMT
Organization: University Of Kentucky, Dept. of Math Sciences
Message-ID: <1991Dec16.040145.2936@ms.uky.edu>
Newsgroups: alt.alien.visitors

An experience that happened to me when I was little...
Time : May of '79 or '80
Place: Forest in western KY
What happened:
        Boy scout campout... night was cold and very clear. Looked
at the sky for constellations and saw an object that looked like a
star moving across the sky at a fairly fast rate. It had the brightness
and size of the average star that night. It was white in color and did
not blink, so I dismissed it as any plane light; I don't think it
flickered like a star, but it was moving too fast for me to be sure.
        It moved straight overhead across the sky. I noticed it when
it was about 60 degrees from one horizon and watched it until it
reached the opposite horizon. The event took about 2 minutes max.
I never heard any noise from it (the forest was very quiet). Someone

said it was a satellite, but even at that age I thought that the object
had to be of considerable size to be seen that clearly. Someone else
suggested that it was an asteroid or shooting-star, but I never saw
any tail from it - it appeared as a distinct dot, and like I said,
wouldn't it have to be of considerable size to be seen that clearly?

        Any comments or insight would be appreciated.

Happy Holidays,

Chris

diaz@s.ms.uky.edu diaz@ukma.BITNET {uunet,etc.}!ukma!diaz

--
Michael Corbin - via FidoNet node 1:104/422
UUCP: !scicom!paranet!User_Name
INTERNET: Michael.Corbin@p0.f428.n104.z1.FIDONET.ORG

From: Michael.Corbin@p0.f428.n104.z1.FIDONET.ORG (Michael Corbin)
Subject: Ufo Announcement
Date: 18 Dec 91 05:19:00 GMT

 * Forwarded from "Alt.Alien.Visitors"
 * Originally from Sara J Cupps
 * Originally dated 12-16-91 12:14

From: sjcupps@IASTATE.EDU (Sara J Cupps)
Date: 16 Dec 91 14:02:58 GMT
Organization: Iowa State University
Message-ID: <1991Dec16.080258@IASTATE.EDU>
Newsgroups: alt.alien.visitors

Be sure to watch the Christmas day edition of "Unsolved Mysteries".
I just heard that the government is supposed to announce something about UFO's
in conjuction with the show.
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sjcupps@iastate.edu   "Inside my heart is breaking,
S. Cupps   My makeup may be flaking
934 Maple #7   But my smile still stays on.
Story City, IA 50248   The show must go on."
USA   -Freddie Mercury | Queen

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Michael Corbin - via FidoNet node 1:104/422
UUCP: !scicom!paranet!User_Name
INTERNET: Michael.Corbin@p0.f428.n104.z1.FIDONET.ORG

From: Michael.Corbin@p0.f428.n104.z1.FIDONET.ORG (Michael Corbin)
Subject: Re: Firsthand Account
Date: 18 Dec 91 05:20:00 GMT

 * Forwarded from "Alt.Alien.Visitors"
 * Originally from David Drumheller
 * Originally dated 12-16-91 17:56

From: drumhell@n5160a.nrl.navy.mil (David Drumheller)
Date: 16 Dec 91 20:04:00 GMT
Message-ID: <1022@ra.nrl.navy.mil>
Newsgroups: alt.alien.visitors

Another firsthand account...

    About eighteen years ago (I was thirteen) I saw some strange lights pass through the clouds at about 10 o'clock at night. I remember standing in the road in front of my parents house when I suddenly looked skyward and saw three colored lights traveling east to west. They were actually `point sources,' but due to the dispersion of light through the clouds, they appeared as three diffuse balls of light. One was blue, another was red, and the third one was white. I never heard a sound.

    I don't really know what possessed my to look up other than the fact that is was very dark outside, and any source of light appearing out of knowhere was bound to get my attention. (We lived in a development several miles from the nearest city, Bethlehem, PA. To this day the neighborhood still has no street lights.)

    After all this time, the only explanation I can come up with is that I saw `ball lightening.' However, I would have expected to hear some noise as well. I'm sure there could have been some reasonable explanation for it at the time. In any case, it was a very strange experience.

Dave Drumheller
Washington, DC

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Michael Corbin - via FidoNet node 1:104/422
UUCP: !scicom!paranet!User_Name
INTERNET: Michael.Corbin@p0.f428.n104.z1.FIDONET.ORG

From: Jim.Speiser@f100.n1010.z9.FIDONET.ORG (Jim Speiser)
Subject: CUFOS Abduction Videotape
Date: 17 Dec 91 20:42:00 GMT

> In the spirit of Bill Chalker's recent post concerning the new
> Australian UFO
> book on computer diskette, I wanted to make everyone in this forum
> aware of
> the newly-produced Center for UFO Studies videotape on the abduction
> phenomenon.

Thanks for making the tape available, Mark. I shall place my order as soon as I've cleared up my Christmas bills. It sounds like a winner!

By the way, if you are still in need of French translators, I have one ready and waiting. I'll send you his address.

Jim

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Jim Speiser - via FidoNet node 1:104/422
UUCP: !scicom!paranet!User_Name
INTERNET: Jim.Speiser@f100.n1010.z9.FIDONET.ORG

From: Jim.Speiser@p666.f100.n1010.z9.FIDONET.ORG (Jim Speiser)
Subject: Noriega Trial
Date: 16 Dec 91 14:28:05 GMT

Don:

Was it you that told us that Noriega's trial was proceeding in Fla.? I know this is gonna sound ridiculous, but could you source me on that? Newspapers? News magazines? CNN? What's the deal? I still haven't heard word one, and I'm beginning to wonder if maybe you misheard, or misread, or maybe I did...

Jim

--
Jim Speiser - via FidoNet node 1:104/422
UUCP: !scicom!paranet!User_Name
INTERNET: Jim.Speiser@p666.f100.n1010.z9.FIDONET.ORG

From: Michael.Corbin@p0.f428.n104.z1.FIDONET.ORG (Michael Corbin)
Subject: Seasons Greetings!
Date: 18 Dec 91 05:30:00 GMT

Happy Holidays from ParaNet and myself!

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Michael Corbin - via FidoNet node 1:104/422
UUCP: !scicom!paranet!User_Name
INTERNET: Michael.Corbin@p0.f428.n104.z1.FIDONET.ORG

From: Linda.Bird@f100.n1010.z9.FIDONET.ORG (Linda Bird)
Subject: Re: Raf Bentwaters/woodbridge
Date: 18 Dec 91 05:47:00 GMT

Hello Jim,

Loren says he looks forward to John's response to his paper.

See ya,

Linda

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Linda Bird - via FidoNet node 1:104/422
UUCP: !scicom!paranet!User_Name
INTERNET: Linda.Bird@f100.n1010.z9.FIDONET.ORG

From: Travis.Hall@p0.f134.n109.z1.FIDONET.ORG (Travis Hall)
Subject: Re: Receipt Acknowledged
Date: 15 Dec 91 23:59:00 GMT

In a post concerning the AVRO Car at the Smithsonian Museum...

> JP> I've been there and haven't seen it. If someone knows where it is I'd
> JP> really like to see it... (I'll send free photos to the 1st correct
> JP> respondee...)
> JP> Thanks, take care.
> JP> John.

John, Suggest you check the Garber Facility at Silver Hill MD. The Air and Space Museum has an extension facility there. Not only do they store

exhibits there for periodic use in the Museum on the Mall, but that is
the location where they restore the aircraft, etc. They have an extensive
exhibit area there and citizens are welcome (you may need an appointment).
Docents run the tours and are very knowledgable. Regards...T
---Update--
Just checked with docent (volunteer guide) friend...The AVRO hovercar is
indeed at this facility. T

--
Travis Hall - via FidoNet node 1:104/422
UUCP: !scicom!paranet!User_Name
INTERNET: Travis.Hall@p0.f134.n109.z1.FIDONET.ORG

From: Travis.Hall@p0.f134.n109.z1.FIDONET.ORG (Travis Hall)
Subject: Re: 300,000 yrs ago, humans in Americas
Date: 18 Dec 91 03:30:00 GMT

 -=> Quoting ncar!wam.umd.edu!infinity to All <=-
 n> Date: 4 Dec 91 00:17:28 GMT
 n> From: David Elmore Coleman <infinity@wam.umd.edu>

 n> In July or August 1989 a French anthropological or archaeological
 n> journal published or reviewed a study by a Brazilian
 n> archaeologist/anthropologist concerning remains in northern Brazil
 n> dated by thermoluminescence to be 300,000 years old. This came on the...

 I took the liberty of looking up the Address for The Univerisity of Sao
 Paulo in one of my guides...I hope this helps. I know this does not look
 like a complete address, but this is what's in the book. At least it's a
 start. Keep up the great posts, they're why I keep commin' back!
 Regards...T

UNIVERSIDADE DE SAO PAULO
05508 SAO PAULO, BRAZIL

Tele: 211-0011 (you'll need to find the country and city codes from
Ma Bell (plus mucho cruzados) 8-}

... Travis Hall
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Travis Hall - via FidoNet node 1:104/422
UUCP: !scicom!paranet!User_Name
INTERNET: Travis.Hall@p0.f134.n109.z1.FIDONET.ORG

From: Mark.Rodeghier@p0.f605.n104.z1.FIDONET.ORG (Mark Rodeghier)
Subject: Cufos Abduction Videotape
Date: 18 Dec 91 12:00:01 GMT

>By the way, if you are still in need of French translators, I
>have one ready and waiting. I'll send you his address.

We have two people working on a translation of a portion of the SOBEPS material, so I won't take you up on your offer of a French translator for the moment. However, I'll keep it in mind because I don't know yet how well the translations will be done by these other two.

You will be interested to know (but keep it under your hat), that Betty Andreasson has agreed to participate in the CUFOS abduction project.

Have a pleasant and safe holidays.
Mark
--
Mark Rodeghier - via FidoNet node 1:104/422
UUCP: !scicom!paranet!User_Name
INTERNET: Mark.Rodeghier@p0.f605.n104.z1.FIDONET.ORG

From: UNHH.UNH.EDU!K_MACARTHUR1
Subject: Cheap analysis of light sources (gulf breeze, etc.)
Date: 18 Dec 91 16:33:21 GMT

From: K_MACARTHUR1@UNHH.UNH.EDU

I think a profitable way to find out what kind of lights are used in any phenomena would be a simple spectroscope. These are telescope like instruments that have splitting prisms/diffraction gratings in them that take the light you focus it on and spread it out in various diffraction lines that give you a clue as to the origin of the light. For example, if the Gulf Breeze lights really are car flares on balloons, the spectrum observed would show the characteristic spectrum lines of magnesium and oxygen. A sodium vapor light would show sodium lines, carbon arcs would show carbon, modern light bulbs would show tungsten from the filament inside, and so on. Sure if aliens use similar technology for lighting it would not prove a thing, but if you could record the spectrum and not be able to find a chemical source for it or it has a chemical source that is impossible for present tech to create, then you may have something. It probably is more valuable as a debunking tool than a

proof positive indicator, though. With today
's technology going down in price, it won't be too long before small radars will be able to be carried on trucks to use to chronicle distance, speed, and other characteristics of objects. People with large boats use radar at sea, although I imagine it sets one back a few thousand dollars or more. Does any group actively send out teams of investigators with real scientific equipment? A VCR camcorder is nice, but corroborating instrument readings would help determine a lot of things.

    Just my $0.02 (American) worth.

    Korac MacArthur
    k_macarthur1@unhh.unh.edu

From: Michael.Corbin@p0.f428.n104.z1.FIDONET.ORG (Michael Corbin)
Subject: The Famous Dr. Steel On 1991 Vg [forwarded]
Date: 18 Dec 91 15:05:00 GMT

 * Forwarded from "Alt.Alien.Visitors"
 * Originally from Daniel Fischer
 * Originally dated 12-17-91 18:39

From: dfi@specklea.mpifr-bonn.mpg.de (Daniel Fischer)
Date: 17 Dec 91 17:39:15 GMT
Organization: Max Planck Institut fuer Radioastronomie
Message-ID: <1991Dec17.173915.29359@mpifr-bonn.mpg.de>
Newsgroups: sci.astro,sci.space,alt.alien.visitors

From DIS@aaocbn.oz.au Tue Dec 17 05:49:11 1991 ...
... did I get the following paper which he asked me to post to the net:

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A ROCK OR A ROCKET?

On November 6th astronomers operating the Spacewatch telescope at Kitt Peak in Arizona found what was at first assumed to be a small rocky asteroid. It was given the code-name 1991 VG. More recent observations from Chile
have indicated that this body, which raised a flurry in the world's media when it flew close (on an astronomical scale) by the Earth on December 5th, may in fact be an old rocket body returning to our planet's vicinity.

Spacewatch, operated by Tom Gehrels, Jim Scotti and David Rabinowitz (University of Arizona) is a relatively small (91 cm aperture) telescope

which has been fitted with a large CCD array and programmed to search for objects such as asteroids and comets which approach the Earth. They do this by letting the sidereal rotation of the Earth cause the instrument to scan across
the sky, with the same area being returned to later, and again once more as a check. Any objects which have moved between scans are picked up by the software, and the operator may then make a visual inspection of the data and calculate a preliminary orbit for the new-found object. Especially for the fainter detections many of the orbits turn out to be geocentric, a piece of man-made debris being indicated. However some very small asteroids have been discovered in this way: 1991 BA last January (the closest-ever observed miss of our planet, at 170,000 km) and 1991 TU in October (at 750,000 km). 1991 VG is the second-closest observed fly-by, at 450,000 km, or just further away than the Moon. All three of these objects were estimated to be about 5--10 metres in size, and are therefore the smallest and intrinsically-faintest items ever
observed telescopically above the atmosphere.

However, 1991 VG was soon realized to be in an unusual orbit for an asteroid: its path is very similar to that of the Earth, being almost circular (eccentricity 0.08), the size of its orbit just 5\% larger than that of the Earth (so that it takes just a few weeks longer than a year to circuit the Sun), and, critically, an extremely small inclination to the ecliptic, the plane of the Earth's orbit. The latter parameter has a value (about a quarter of a degree only) which is consistent with a man-made spacecraft. Initial computations by Brian Marsden (Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics) indicated that it might be an upper stage from the U.S. Centaur rocket which put the German Helios 1 satellite into a heliocentric orbit in December 1974, since tracing the orbit of 1991 VG back in time showed a close approach about then. A Soviet craft was also a possibility. However, as better astrometric data for 1991 VG came in it was possible for its orbit to be improved, and Marsden found that he could not identify a close approach to the Earth since the beginning of the space age, and so the `rocket' option was discounted. Since there are about a billion asteroids of this size or larger believed to orbit in the inner solar system, the chances are that some of them will have orbits very similar to the Earth, and in fact these are much more likely to be detected by telescopes like Spacewatch. From the opposite point of view a calculation of the probability of a collision by such an object with our planet indicates that its lifetime against such an event is only about 250,000 years, which means that it must have arrived in its present orbit in the astronomically-recent past. Marsden suggested that it might be an object which had spent most of its life in a so-called `Trojan' orbit, having exactly the same orbital period as the Earth but keeping 60 degrees ahead or behind of the planet at all times, until it recently slipped that mooring. Many Trojan asteroids are seen in association with Jupiter, and in 1990 a Mars Trojan was discovered.

However, close to the fly-by of 1991 VG Richard West (European Southern Observatory) collected time-resolved images of the object using the Danish 1.54 m telescope in Chile: the path taken at that time was over the South Pole and therefore out of the reach of most northern telescopes. He found that the brightness of 1991 VG varies rapidly and has a period of about 7--8 minutes, with several extremely bright flashes being detected. These

are as expected for a rotating, shiny spacecraft which occasionally renders a specular reflection in the direction of the viewer. Such a short period also seems inconsistent with a natural rocky asteroid, since it is unlikely that such an object of 5--10 m diameter could have a spin period of less that one hour without flying apart: its cohesive strength would be too low. In addition the relative brightnesses in different regions of the visible spectrum were essentially solar, warranting for a colourless object rather than a reddish asteroidal reflection spectrum. West concludes that 1991 VG is most likely an artificial object rotating about more than one axis.

This being the case it opens up a problem for dynamicists: if 1991 VG is indeed the Centaur rocket body launched in 1974 then how has its orbit been perturbed so as to bring it back to our vicinity now? One possibility is that excess fuel has escaped and therefore had a rocket-effect without being ignited. It also seems inevitable that it will also soon be claimed as being an alien spacecraft left by extraterrestrial visitors, even though science will undoubtedly be able to provide a plausible solution. If it is a rocket then 1991 VG also provides an example of mankind's ability to pollute not only his own planet and immediate space environment, but interplanetary space as well: the prevention of such pollution was the subject of a resolution of the International Astronomical Union at its General Assembly in Buenos Aires last August.

So is 1991 VG a rock or a rocket? An answer to this may be gained over the next week when Steve Ostro (Jet Propulsion Laboratory) attempts to get radar echoes from it using the giant radar at Arecibo (Puerto Rico). An attempt from Goldstone (California) on December 12th was unsuccessful. The radio reflection properties of metal are very different to those of rock, so that a spacecraft would give a much stronger echo; its structure would also affect the returned polarization. Even then the answer may not be definitive since it is known that many asteroids, like meteorites, are made of nickel-iron.

Is it so unlikely that a spacecraft would come back to Earth? In fact, using the orbit of 1991 VG prior to the recent encounter ($a = 1.05$ AU, $e = 0.075$, $i = 0.22$ deg) the chance of this object hitting the Earth converts to a lifetime of only 250,000 years (other Earth-crossing asteroids have lifetimes more like 100 million years). Increasing the cross-section to that having a radius equal to the miss distance of 450,000 km implies that an object in such an orbit would fly-by the Earth by that distance or less once per 20 years or so: pretty frequent.

Duncan Steel,
Anglo-Australian Observatory,
Coonabarabran, NSW.

From: DIS@aaocbn.oz.au
Subject: NOT HELIOS 1?

To: p515dfi@mpirbn.uucp
X-Vms-To: IN%"p515dfi@c1a.mpifr-bonn.mpg.de"
Status: R

1991 December 17th.

Dear Daniel,

Thanks for the message. I believe that Brian Marsden identified a COSMOS craft from earlier in 1974 as a possibility, but at that time he was looking for returns around that time (prior to a good orbit for 1991 VG being available). Now no return to the Earth's vicinity is found purely from gravitation: some have looked at the possibilities of radiation pressure for a large hollow object (or a panel), or fuel escaping. It is not possible, it seems, to narrow down to a candidate if the year (even) when the object was last close to the Earth is not known.

I believe that the Helios 1 booster is still listed in the Satellite Situation Report (i.e. return to Earth's surface NOT indicated) although I will need to check on that tomorrow.

Duncan Steel

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Dr Duncan Steel,
Anglo-Australian Observatory,
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Coonabarabran, NSW 2357,
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Michael Corbin - via FidoNet node 1:104/422
UUCP: !scicom!paranet!User_Name
INTERNET: Michael.Corbin@p0.f428.n104.z1.FIDONET.ORG

From: Michael.Corbin@p0.f428.n104.z1.FIDONET.ORG (Michael Corbin)
Subject: Re: Re^2: Firsthand Account
Date: 18 Dec 91 22:58:00 GMT

 * Forwarded from "Alt.Alien.Visitors"
 * Originally from Notes Administrator (dan Peterson
 * Originally dated 12-18-91 12:08

From: notes@hpgrla.gr.hp.com (notes administrator (Dan Peterson))
Date: 14 Dec 91 04:40:00 GMT
Organization: Hewlett-Packard, Greeley, CO
Message-ID: <15230006@hpgrla.gr.hp.com>
Newsgroups: alt.alien.visitors

I used to spend quite a bit of time up at night with my telescope. Those of you familiar with trail ridge road thru Rocky Mountain National Park is an incredible place to star gaze if the weather cooperates. I have seen ball lighting (red and blue) on trail ridge road on several occasions. I have pointed my telescope at the event (A bright undulating ball at 180X from a distance of 10 or so miles). I watched one event where the lighting formed south of my location (3 1/2 miles south east of the visitor center) travelled at a an extremely high rate of speed and dissapated as it closed in on Longs peak. At 12000 feet, flatlanders (I live at 5000 feet) get oxygen deprivation after several hours. My first thought was UFO and I could have allowed myself to buy right into the myth. Still I reasoned out what I was seeing and correctly evaluated the event as St. Elmo's fire. I see the aurora borealis about once a month because I know what I am looking for and I live outside of town. One night I watched a group of stealth fighters fly over at 3:00AM travelling east toward SAC was my guess. That was over 3 years ago (There were no stealth fighters then). All this babbling has a point.

My point is: question your senses at night, from experience, depth perception is not as good at night (you can test this by going outside on a very dark starry night and looking straight up, if you have a difficult time remaining steady you will see what I mean). During a full moon, go outside with 4 coins a penny, nickle, dime, and quarter. Estimate mentally which coin held at arms length most closely estimates the size the moon (NEXT FULL DEC 21). Then actually perform the experiment. Question your senses at night. As human beings we have certainly been programs by our societies to believe some things that just are not true. If you read a little quantum mechanics, you will see that 'aliens' would have to be some "MIRACULOUS" creatures get here from there. I am asking any and all aliens to visit my house, I live in the country, you can make a nice crop circle when you land, I dont have neighbors so you wont terrify anybody, we can look at your home star with my scope. I'll be honest. I used to believe in this stuff and now after a lot of new valid experiences and knowledge. I dont. So feel free to land at my house, you can have coffee and a moon pie, and I'll tell everyone I believe again.

starman

"what would i be thinking if i were a gelatinous creature living near a sulfur spewing volcanic vent under a gazillion pounds of water pressure???"

:wq!

--
Michael Corbin - via FidoNet node 1:104/422
UUCP: !scicom!paranet!User_Name
INTERNET: Michael.Corbin@p0.f428.n104.z1.FIDONET.ORG

From: doc.imperial.ac.uk!aixssc.ibm.co.uk!rob
Subject: Plasma Vortices
Date: 19 Dec 91 04:35:33 GMT

From: Robert Trevelyan <rob@aixssc.ibm.co.uk>

Sheldon,
 Saw a draft copy of a crop circle catalogue by Michael Chorost
 a few days ago. It had a picture of plasma vortex created in a
 lab. It was credited with your name and the photo was credited
 to Richard Shapiro. The photo shows a quintuplet created in
 the lab but did you manage to create a formation in dust similar
 to the Japanese scientist. I would be interested to hear your
 findings on this although I don't believe plasma vortices create
 crop circles I am interested in all aspect of this phenomenon.
 Regards, Robert

--
Robert Trevelyan   UKnet: rob@aixssc.ibm.co.uk
AIX Communications   VNET: TREVELR at NHBVM7
     Voice: +44-(0)256-56144

From: Jim.Speiser@p666.f100.n1010.z9.FIDONET.ORG (Jim Speiser)
Subject: Oldest Secret Document
Date: 18 Dec 91 23:04:42 GMT

SYSTEM OF SECRECY IS LABELED `ABSURD'

Knight-Ridder News Service

      WASHINGTON - A file designated WCD-9944-X-1 lies under lock and key on the sixth floor of the National Archives. Inside the file, faded and frail with age, is the oldest classified document in the United States.
      Subject: Troop movements in Europe. Date: April 15, 1917 - nine days after the United States entered World War I. Classification: Confidential.

The document stays secret because the US Army says releasing it would damage national security.

Archives are opening and secret documents are being released behind the Iron Curtain. Lies are being erased and blank spaces are being filled with official histories. Yet in Washington, millions of documents remain classified for no clear reason, according to historians, researchers and government officials.

The secrecy that keeps the seal on file WCD-9944-X-1 "signifies the level of absurdity that he classification system has reached," said Steven Aftergood of the Federation of American Scientists, who discovered the document's existence last month.

No one knows how many classified documents there are in the United States.

"A mountain...tens of millions, or hundreds of millions or billions," said Steven Garfinkle, whose job as head of the federal Information Security Oversight Office is to track the government's secrecy system.

No one knows how to go about reading, declassifying and releasing all of those documents.

"We've got to do something, or that mountain's going to build up more," Garfinkle said. "What are we going to do? Wave a magic wand and declassify it? Burn it?"

No one knows how much of the hidden record of the nation's history will stay secret forever.

File WCD-9944-X-1 is one of "several documents that date back to the World War I era that remain classified," Garfinkle said. "Obviously, it seems absurd on the surface."

Michael Knapp, an archivist at the military-reference branch of the National Archives, is one of the few people to have seen the document since 1917. He said he uncovered it in response to Aftergood's Freedom of Information Act request for "the oldest military document that we have that is still classified."

Knapp said the document discusses "troop movements in Europe" during the first days of World War I. He said he could not discuss its tittle, its length or its language, because it is classified "confidential."

That secrecy classification remained in place after the Army last reviewed the document in December 1976. Under a 1981 presidential order tightening security strictures, a document may be classified "confidential" if its disclosure would damage national security.

Since the document remains secret, it's hard to know how the information in it would harm the nation 73 years after Word War I ended.

--
Jim Speiser - via FidoNet node 1:104/422
UUCP: !scicom!paranet!User_Name
INTERNET: Jim.Speiser@p666.f100.n1010.z9.FIDONET.ORG

********To have your comments in the next issue, send electronic mail to********

'infopara' at the following address:

UUCP {ncar,isis,csn}!scicom!infopara
DOMAIN infopara@scicom.alphacdc.com

 For administrative requests (subscriptions, back issues) send to:

UUCP {ncar,isis,csn}!scicom!infopara-request
DOMAIN infopara-request@scicom.alphacdc.com
 To obtain back issues by anonymous ftp, connect to:

DOMAIN ftp.uiowa.edu (directory /archives/paranet)

Mail to private Paranet/Fidonet addresses from the newsletters:
DOMAIN firstname.lastname@paranet.org
UUCP scicom!paranet.org!firstname.lastname

**********The**End**of**Info-ParaNet**Newsletter**********